

Message Text

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65-61

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-07 AID-05

CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03

SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-01 ACDA-10 MC-02

NRC-07 PA-02 PRS-01 /118 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8732

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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DEPT PASS OES AND ERDA FOR R.E. UPCHURCH

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, PFOR, SOPN, SF

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN URANIUM ENRICHMENT

REF: CAPETOWN 439

1. AS A TECHNICAL PAPER AT THE EUROPEAN NUCLEAR CONFERENCE BEING HELD IN PARIS APRIL 21-25, MR. A. J. A. ROUX AND MR. W. L. GRANT, CHAIRMAN AND GENERAL MANAGER, RESPECTIVELY, OF THE URANIUM ENRICHMENT CORP OF SOUTH AFRICA, PROVIDED FURTHER GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN ENRICHMENT PROCESS. THE TECHNICAL DATA PRESENTED WAS VERY GENERAL AND INCOMPLETE.

MR. ROUX DID STATE THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS WILLING TO SHARE AND COOPERATE WITH FRIENDLY COUNTRIES IN A PLANT IN SOUTH AFRICA. HE INDICATED THAT DISCUSSIONS WERE NOW UNDER WAY WITH OTHER GOVTS AND THAT IN ANY EVENT, THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVT WOULD SEE TO THE
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CONSTRUCTION OF A PLANT IN SOUTH AFRICA PRODUCING

5,000 TONS PER YEAR SWU BY 1986.

2. MR. ROUX BRIEFLY DESCRIBED THE UCOR PROCESS AS A HIGH PERFORMANCE STATIONERY WALLED CENTRIFUGE USING UF₆ IN HYDROGEN AS THE PROCESS FLUID. HE MENTIONED THAT THE PILOT PLANT AT VALINDABA WAS DESIGNED TO BE FLEXIBLE AND SUPPORT THE EFFECTIVE TRANSFER OF THE PROCESS TO THE COMMERCIAL STATE. HE ADDED THAT HIS GOVT HAD INVESTED THE EQUIVALENT OF \$148 MILLION IN URANIUM ENRICHMENT RESEARCH EXCLUDING THE COST OF THE PILOT PLANT. SOUTH AFRICA CONSIDERS A 5,000 TON PER YEAR PLANT ECONOMICALLY VIABLE, ASSUMING A SELLING PRICE OF \$74 PER KILOGRAM AND USING 6 MIL POWER. HE NOTED THAT THE PROSPECTIVE SOUTH AFRICAN PLANT WOULD COME INTO OPERATION BY 1984 AND REACH FULL PRODUCTION IN 1986 AND COULD BE EXPANDED TO 10,000 TONS PER YEAR SWU CAPACITY.

3. THE IMPACT OF THIS ANNOUNCEMENT CAN BE BETTER ASSESSED AT THE END OF THE EUROPEAN NUCLEAR CONFERENCE; HOWEVER, IT IS CERTAIN TO ENTER INTO THE MINDS OF THOSE CONSIDERING A POSSIBLE EURODIF 2 PLANT.
RUSH

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